



# Missionarii Sancti Joannis Baptistæ

*Vox clamantis in deserto, parate viam Domini*

1101 AMSTERDAM ROAD ✦ PARK HILLS ✦ KENTUCKY ✦ 41011

## Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of His Faithful



ATCHING BESIDE A DEATH-BED," wrote Willa Cather in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, "was not a hardship, but a privilege. In those days, even in European countries, death had a solemn social importance. It was not regarded as a moment when certain bodily organs ceased to function, but as a dramatic climax, a moment when the soul made its entrance into the next world, passing in full consciousness through a lowly door to an unimaginable scene. Among the watchers there was always the hope that the dying man might reveal something of what he alone could see; that his countenance, if not his lips, would speak, and on his features would fall some light or shadow from beyond. The 'Last Words' of great men, Napoleon, Lord Byron, were still printed in gift-books, and the dying murmurs of every common man and woman were listened for and treasured by their neighbors and kinsfolk. These sayings, no matter how unimportant, were given oracular significance and pondered by those who must one day go the same road."

In the lives of the saints, one of the most important and telling moments is found at their passing from this world. The Carmelite Martyrs of Compiègne sang hymns all the way to the death of the last sister. St. Therese's death was striking in that, looking upon her Crucifix, she pronounced her love for His Majesty using the third person and then switched to the second person: "Oh! I

love Him! ... My God... I love You!" The Sisters present had time to kneel down around her bed, and they were witnesses to the ecstasy of the dying saint. Her face had regained the lily-white complexion it always had in full health; her eyes were fixed above, brilliant with peace and joy... this lasted the space of a Credo and she breathed her last. A heavenly smile remained on her face, making her ravishingly beautiful. She held her Crucifix so tightly that the Sisters had to force it from her hands to prepare her for burial.



**From November 1 to November 8, the Missionaries of St. John the Baptist will offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the repose of the souls of our benefactors who have died, as well as for the deceased relatives and friends of our benefactors (to participate see reverse side).**

When St. Catherine of Siena approached death she continued to pray for the Church, for the pope and all those who supported her, culminating in a confession to heaven: "Beloved, You call me, I come. Not through any service of mine, but through Your mercy and the power of Your Blood." She then made the sign of the Cross and cried out: "Blood, Blood..." bowing her head finishing, "Father, into Your hands I commit my spirit." As she said this, she gave up the ghost and her face became as beautiful as an angel's, radiant with tenderness and happiness.

The great medieval king of Castile, Fernando III, after instructing his son on the duties of a Catholic monarch, raised his eyes to heaven and said: "Lord, Thou gave to me a kingdom I did not have and more honor and power than I deserved. Thou gave to me life as long as it was Thy pleasure. Lord, I give Thee thanks; and I surrender to Thee

and deliver to Thee the kingdom Thou gavest me, with the improvements that I was able to achieve, and I offer Thee my soul." This great king had just seen the blessed in heaven who had invited him to take his place of honor among them. This vision greatly comforted the king. Taking a candle to hold it in his hands, Fernando breathed his final prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, my Redeemer, I came into the world naked from the womb of my mother. I return naked to the womb of the earth. Receive my soul, and by the merits of your holy passion, deign also to give me a place among your servants."

In the last moments of his life Fernando requested the clergy to recite the litanies, and finally to sing the *Te Deum*. The king became enraptured, and as the chant of thanksgiving concluded, he inclined his head, closed his eyes and peacefully exhaled his soul to God.

These great men and women saints died holy deaths because they were faithful to God. They loved Him and kept His Commandments. Yet, as everyone knows, most do not have such a death in leaving this life. God, however, in His infinite Mercy and Love, has provided another way for those who fail to die to the world and themselves so perfectly as to have such a precious death. He provides a way for them to die anew in the purifying fires of Purgatory such that their leaving that place below to rise up to heaven is precious and beautiful. What they failed to do on earth, they do there. To make this possible for them, we are required to help. Let us, then, pray for the Poor Souls and strive to shorten our own Purgatory. ❀



### Prayer For Our Relatives In Purgatory

GOOD JESUS, Whose loving Heart was ever troubled by the sorrows of others, look with pity on the souls of our dear ones in Purgatory. O Good Jesus, Who "loved Your own," hear our cry for mercy, and grant those whom Thou didst call from our homes and hearts, may soon enjoy everlasting rest in the home of Thy love in heaven. *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen*

### HAVE PITY! YOU AT LEAST, MY FRIENDS...

HEAR your loved ones softly pleading,  
From the green graves lonesome lying,  
Ever crying:

"Have pity!

You at least, my friends. . ."

WHILE the hot skies far are glowing,  
Think of pain no relief knowing,  
Their prison fires appalling  
Their piteous voices calling:

"Have pity!

You at least, my friends. . ."

IN the time of sad remembrance,  
Give a prayer to old friends gone,  
Let your heart with mournful greeting,  
Hear their sad appeal repeating:

"Have pity!

You at least, my friends. . ."

By the love in life you bore them,  
By the tears in death shed o'er them,  
By their words and looks in dying,  
Hear their plaintive voices crying:

"Have pity!

You at least, my friends. . ."

### INDULGENCE

An indulgence, applicable only to the Souls in Purgatory, is granted to the faithful, who devoutly visit a cemetery and pray, even if only mentally, for the departed. The indulgence offered is plenary each day from the 1st to the 8th of November; on other days of the year it is partial.

If you would like to have the names of your beloved deceased included in this octave of Masses, please write them down (index card provided) and send them to us to be placed on the Altar of Sacrifice here at Our Lady of Lourdes.

All donations are used to help us continue to build up the Body of Christ, (checks payable to the Missionaries of St. John the Baptist or just MSJB).



May God reward you!

The Missionaries of Saint John the Baptist ([www.msjb.info](http://www.msjb.info))